

Amendments to the Claims:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims:

1. **(Currently amended)** A water-based ink comprising a colored microparticle dispersion having water and a microparticle containing a resin and a colorant,

wherein the microparticle has a core part and a shell part to form a core-shell structure made of resin and the core part and the shell part are cross-linked with a cross-linking agent, and the core part comprises the colorant[[.]]; and
the resin contained in the microparticle has a group represented by General Formula (1):

General Formula (1)

- (EO)_m- (PO)_n- (TO)_p-R

wherein EO represents an ethylene oxide group, PO represents a polygene oxide group, and TO represents a tetramethylene oxide group, and each is subjected to random or block copolymerization; each of the ethylene oxide group, the propylene oxide group, and the tetramethylene oxide group represented by EO, PO, and TO, respectively, may be further substituted; each of m, n, and p is an

integer of 0 - 500 in which $2 \geq m + n + p \geq 500$ is held;
and R represents a hydrogen atom, a hydroxyl group, an
alkyl group, an aryl group, or a heterocyclic group.

2. **(Canceled)**

3. **(Original)** The water-based ink of claim 1, wherein a polymerizable emulsifying compound is used to prepare the colored microparticle dispersion.

4. **(Original)** The water-based ink of claim 1, wherein a volume average diameter of the microparticles is 10 to 100 nm.

5. **(Original)** The water-based ink of claim 1, wherein a variation coefficient of the volume average diameter of the microparticles is not more than 80%.

6. **(Original)** An ink-jet ink containing the water-based ink of claim 1.

7. **(Original)** A method of preparing the colored microparticle dispersion of claim 1, wherein the cross-

linked core-shell particle is prepared by the method comprising the steps of:

- (i) dissolving a colorant and a resin in a water-insoluble organic solvent to obtain a colorant solution;
- (ii) mixing the colorant solution with water and an emulsifying agent so as to obtain a colorant emulsion; and
- (iii) adding a cross-linking agent to the colorant emulsion so as to form the cross-linked core-shell particle.

8. (Original) A method of forming an image, comprising the step of ejecting a droplet of the ink-jet ink of claim 6 through an ink-jet head in accordance with a digital signal onto an ink receiving sheet.